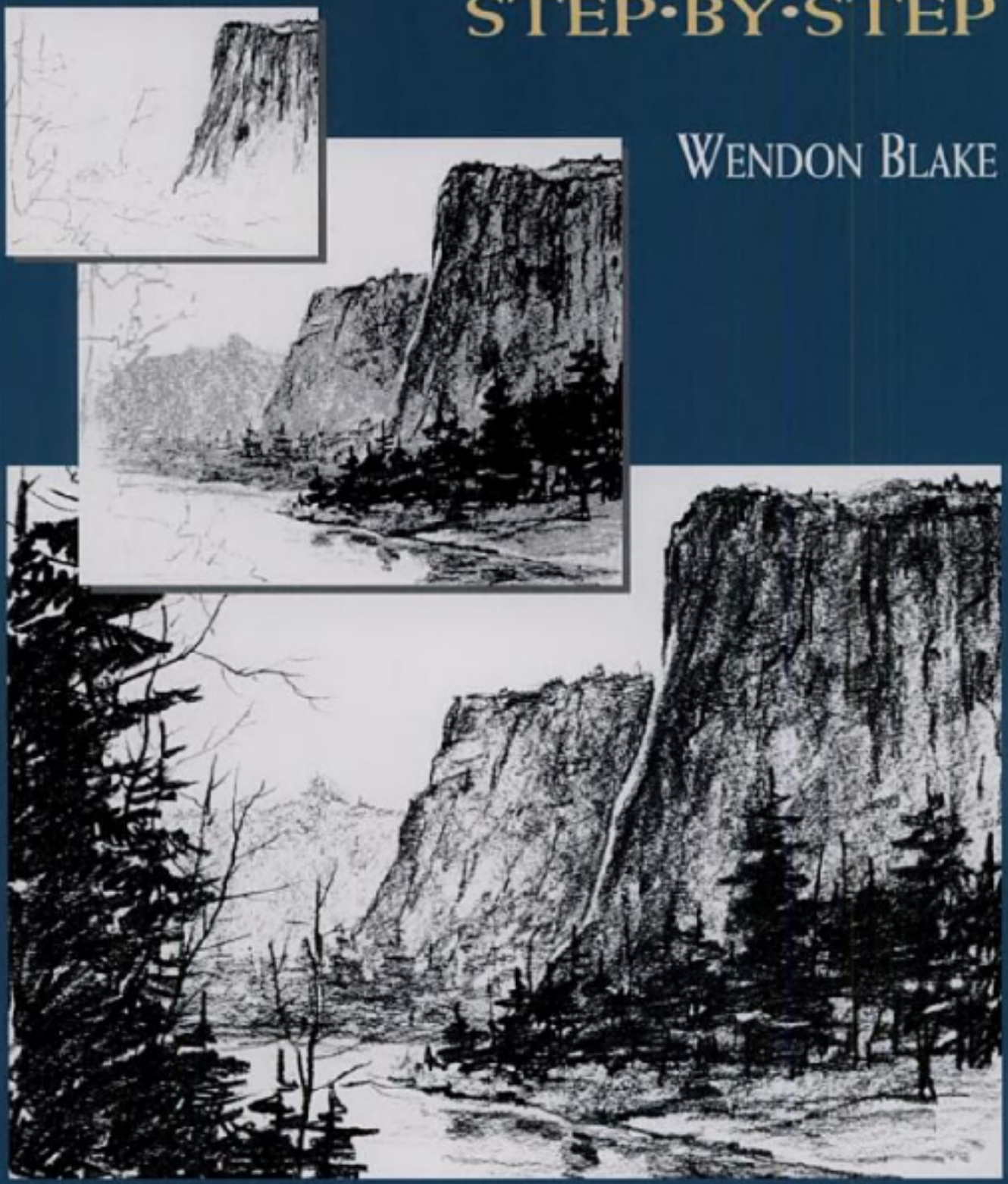
LANDSCAPE DRAWING

STEP·BY·STEP

WENDON BLAKE



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CONTENTS

Introduction 4
Getting Started 5
Equipment 6
Warming Up 8
Measuring 10
Proportions 11
Linear Perspective 12
Aerial Perspective 13
Values 14
Drawing Cubical Forms 18
Drawing Cubical Forms Step-by-Step 20
Drawing Cylindrical and Conical Forms 22
Drawing Cylindrical Forms Step-by-Step 24
Drawing Rounded Forms 26
Drawing Rounded Forms Step-by-Step 28
Drawing Irregular Forms 30
Drawing Irregular Forms Step-by-Step 32
Pencil Drawing 34
Demonstration 1. Trees 36
Demonstration 2. Meadow 40
Demonstration 3. Stream 44
Demonstration 4. Rocky Shore 48
Chalk Drawing 52
Demonstration 5. Mountains 54
Demonstration 6. Surf 58
Demonstration 7. Snow and Ice 62
Charcoal Drawing 66
Demonstration 8. Forest 68
Demonstration 9. Pond 72
Demonstration 10. Dunes on Beach 76
Light Creates New Pictures 80

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Landscape Drawing. Strolling outdoors with a sketchbook under your arm and a few pencils in your pocket—that's an artist's idea of heaven on earth. To wander through the woods, climb a mountain path, or walk barefoot on the beach, absorbing the beauty of nature, is a joy in itself. But the pleasure of the outdoors becomes infinitely greater when you have the skill to record the beauty of nature on drawing paper. The tools and techniques of drawing are so simple, the process so rapid and spontaneous, that drawing is the ideal medium for capturing your emotional response to nature. A landscape drawing can be anything from a five-minute sketch of a single tree to a panoramic landscape of mountains that may take an hour or more. You can return from a morning's walk with several finished drawings or a dozen rapid sketches that may be lovely in themselves or may form the basis for paintings created in the studio.

Indoors or Outdoors. Although some people are outdoor artists and others are indoor artists, it's important to remember that the best landscapes always *start* outdoors, even if they're finished in the studio. The only way to learn how to draw a cliff or a cloud is to go out and find it. There's no substitute for firsthand knowledge of your subject. Working on location will strengthen your powers of observation and train your visual memory. So it's important to spend as much time as you can drawing outdoors, even if those drawings are nothing more than small, quick studies for bigger drawings or paintings which you hope to develop indoors. Those on-the-spot drawings—no matter how rough and crude they may turn out to be—will have a freshness and authenticity that you can get only by looking straight at the subject. If you decide to use these outdoor sketches as the basis for more work indoors, the *finished* drawing or painting will have a feeling of reality that you can never get by working just from memory or imagination.

Learning to See. The first few pages of *Landscape Drawing* are planned to train your powers of observation. You'll learn how to measure the height, width, and slope of various landscape elements, such as trees and rock formations. You'll learn how to judge the proportions of typical landscape forms such as boulders, trees, and clouds. The elements of linear and aerial perspective will be explained. And you'll learn how to judge values—the comparative lightness or darkness of your subject—so you can convert the colors of nature into the black-and-white tones of a drawing in pencil, chalk, or charcoal.

Starting with Basic Forms. Every contemporary landscape painter remembers Cézanne's famous observation that all the complex shapes of nature are based on a few simple geometric forms. So you'll learn how to visualize cubical forms as the basis for drawing landscape elements such as rocks and cliffs; cylindrical and conical forms as the basis of tree trunks and hills; rounded forms as the basis of boulders and masses of foliage. You'll also learn how to construct simple non-geometric forms as the basis for drawing objects with erratic shapes, such as a snow-covered tree or a mass of flying surf at the seashore. The noted artist Ferdinand Petrie draws a series of step-by-step demonstrations to show you the four fundamental stages in transforming cubical, cylindrical, rounded, and irregular shapes into typical forms of nature such as a rocky shore, a tree stump, trees, and windswept clouds.

Demonstrations. Petrie then shows you how to put all these techniques to work in a series of ten step-by-step demonstrations of complete landscape and coastal subjects: the rich texture and detail of trees; the intricate forms of a meadow with the broad shapes of hills in the distance; a stream winding among rocks and trees; a beach with the complex shapes of rocks; the rugged forms of mountains; the drama of surf crashing against a rocky shoreline; the soft, yet solid shapes of a snowy landscape; a shadowy pine forest; the still water of a pond surrounded by the diverse forms of the landscape; and finally, the rhythmic contours of sand dunes on a beach.

Drawing Media. These landscape demonstrations are organized according to medium, in three groupings: pencil, chalk, and charcoal. The demonstrations present a wide range of drawing techniques to show you the many ways of rendering contour, light and shade, texture, and detail in these versatile drawing media. Petrie's demonstrations show you how to render the forms of nature with various combinations of lines, strokes, and blended tones. Interspersed among the demonstrations are actual-size close-ups which show you many ways of rendering form with various types of pencil, chalk, and charcoal on different drawing papers.

Finding Your Own Way. These varied drawing tools, techniques, and surfaces are presented to help you find your own way. Fortunately, pencils, chalk, charcoal, and most drawing papers are inexpensive, so you're free to try as many alternatives as possible. Gradually, you'll discover which materials and methods seem most natural to you.

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Keep It Simple. The best way to start drawing is to get yourself just two things: a pencil and a pad of white drawing paper about twice the size of the page you're now reading. An ordinary office pencil will do—but test it to make sure that you can make a pale gray line by gliding it lightly over the paper, and a rich black line by pressing a bit harder. If you'd like to buy something at the art-supply store, ask for an HB pencil, which is a good all-purpose drawing tool, plus a thicker, darker pencil for bolder work, usually marked 4B, 5B, or 6B. Your drawing pad should contain sturdy white paper with a very slight texture—not as smooth as typing paper. (Ask for cartridge paper in Britain.) To get started with chalk drawing, all you need is a black pastel pencil or a Conté pencil. And just two charcoal pencils will give you a good taste of charcoal drawing: get one marked "medium" and another marked "soft." You can use all these different types of pencils on the same drawing pad.

Pencils. When we talk about pencil drawing, we usually mean *graphite* pencil. This is usually a cylindrical stick of black, slightly slippery graphite surrounded by a thicker cylinder of wood. Artists' pencils are divided roughly into two groupings: soft and hard. A soft pencil will make a darker line than a hard pencil. Soft pencils are usually marked B, plus a number to indicate the degree of softness—3B is softer and blacker than 2B. Hard pencils are marked H and the numbers work the same way—3H is harder and makes a paler line than 2H. HB is considered an all-purpose pencil because it falls midway between hard and soft. Most artists use more soft pencils than hard pencils. When you're ready to experiment with a variety of pencils, buy a full range of soft ones from HB to 6B. You can also buy cylindrical graphite sticks in various thicknesses to fit into metal or plastic holders. And if you'd like to work with broad strokes, you can get rectangular graphite sticks about as long as your index finger.

Chalk. A black pastel pencil or Conté pencil is just a cylindrical stick of black chalk and, like the graphite pencil, it's surrounded by a cylinder of wood. But once you've tried chalk in pencil form, you should also get a rectangular black stick of hard pastel or Conté crayon. You may also want to buy cylindrical sticks of black chalk that fit into metal or plastic holders.

Charcoal. Charcoal pencils usually come in two forms. One form is a thin stick of charcoal surrounded by wood, like a graphite pencil. Another form is a stick of charcoal surrounded by a cylinder of paper that you can peel off in a narrow strip to expose fresh charcoal as the point wears down. When you want a complete "palette" of charcoal pencils, get just three of them, marked "hard," "medium," and "soft." (Some manufacturers grade charcoal pencils HB through 6B, like graphite pencils; HB is the hardest and 6B is the softest.) You should also buy a few sticks of natural charcoal. You can get charcoal "leads" to fit into metal or plastic holders like those used for graphite and chalk.

Paper. You could easily spend your life doing wonderful drawings on ordinary white drawing paper, but you should try other kinds. Charcoal paper has a delicate, ribbed texture and a very hard surface that makes your stroke look rough and allows you to blend your strokes to create velvety tones. And you should try some *really* rough paper with a ragged, irregular "tooth" that makes your strokes look bold and granular. Ask your art-supply dealer to show you his roughest drawing papers. Buy a few sheets and try them out.

Erasers (Rubbers). For pencil drawing, the usual eraser is soft rubber, generally pink or white, which you can buy in a rectangular shape about the size of your thumb or in the form of a pencil, surrounded by a peel-off paper cylinder like a charcoal pencil. For chalk and charcoal drawing, the best eraser is kneaded rubber (or putty rubber), a gray square of very soft rubber that you can squeeze like clay to make any shape that's convenient. A thick, blocky soap eraser is useful for cleaning up the white areas of the drawing.

Odds and Ends. You also need a wooden drawing board to support your drawing pad—or perhaps a sheet of soft fiberboard to which you can tack loose sheets of paper. Get some single-edge razor blades or a sharp knife (preferably with a safe, retractable blade) for sharpening your drawing tools; a sandpaper pad (like a little book of sandpaper) for shaping your drawing tools; some pushpins or thumbtacks (drawing pins in Britain); a paper cylinder (as thick as your thumb) called a stomp, for blending tones; and a spray can of fixative, which is a very thin, virtually invisible varnish to keep your drawings from smudging.

Work Area. When you sit down to work, make sure that the light comes from your left if you're right-handed, and from your right if you're left-handed, so your hand won't cast a shadow on your drawing paper. A jar is a good place to store pencils, sharpened end up to protect the points. Store sticks of chalk or charcoal in a shallow box or in a plastic silverware tray with convenient compartments—which can be good for storing pencils too. To keep your erasers clean, store them apart from your drawing tools—in a separate little box or in a compartment of that plastic tray.

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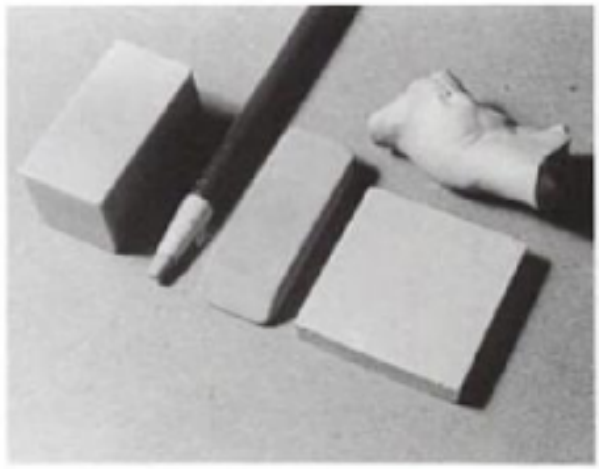
Pencils. The common graphite pencil comes in many forms. Looking from right to left, you see the all-purpose HB pencil; a thicker, softer pencil that makes a broader, blacker mark; a metal holder that grips a slender, cylindrical lead; a plastic holder that grips a thick lead; and finally a rectangular stick of graphite that makes a broad, bold mark on the paper. It's worthwhile to buy some pencils as well as two or three different types of holders to see which ones feel most comfortable in your hand.

Chalk. Shown here are four kinds of chalk. Looking from the lower right to the upper left, you see the small, rectangular Conté crayon; a larger, rectangular stick of hard pastel; hard pastel in the form of a pencil that's convenient for linear drawing; and a cylindrical stick of chalk in a metal holder. All these drawing tools are relatively inexpensive, and so it's a good idea to try each one to see which you like best.

Charcoal. This versatile drawing medium comes in many forms. Looking up from the bottom of this photo, you see a cylindrical stick of natural charcoal; a rectangular stick of natural charcoal; a charcoal pencil; another kind of charcoal pencil—with paper that you gradually tear away as you wear down the point; and a cylindrical stick of charcoal in a metal holder. Natural charcoal smudges and erases easily, so it's good for broad tonal effects. A charcoal pencil makes firm lines and strokes, but the strokes don't blend as easily.



Erasers (Rubbers). From left to right, you see the common soap eraser, best for cleaning broad areas of bare paper; a harder, pink eraser in pencil form for making precise corrections on small areas of graphite-pencil drawings; a bigger pink eraser with wedge-shaped ends for making broader corrections; and a square of kneaded rubber (putty rubber) that's best for chalk and charcoal drawing. Kneaded rubber squashes like clay (as you see in the upper right) and can take any shape you want. Press the kneaded rubber down on the paper and pull away; scrub only when necessary.

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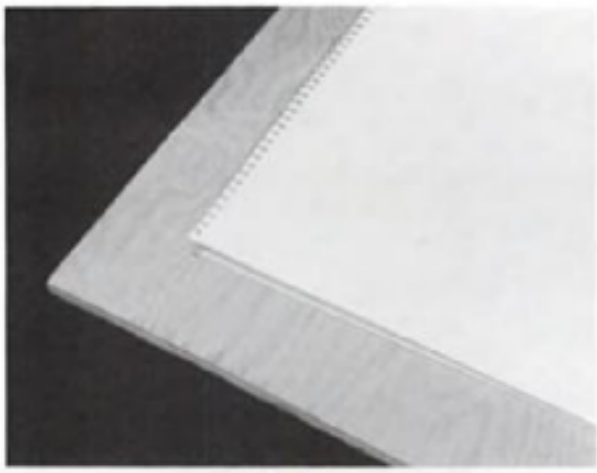
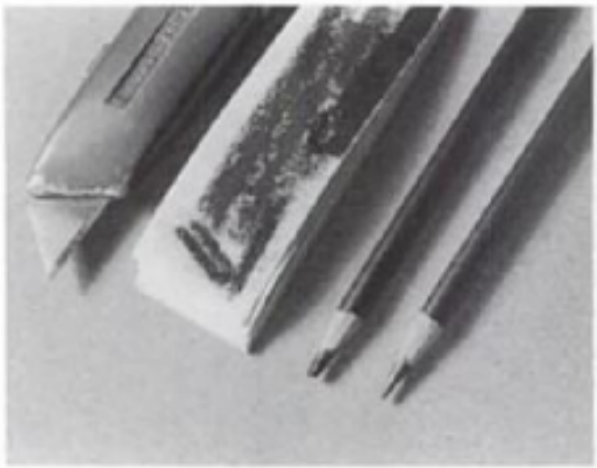


Drawing Board and Pad. Drawing paper generally comes in pads that are bound on one edge like a book. Most convenient is a spiral binding like the one you see here, since each page folds behind the others when you've finished a drawing. The pad won't be stiff enough to give you proper support by itself, so get a wooden drawing board from your art-supply store—or simply buy a piece of plywood or fiberboard. If you buy your drawing paper in sheets, rather than pads, buy a piece of soft fiberboard to which you can tack your paper.

Storage. Store your pencils, sticks of chalk, and sticks of charcoal with care—don't just toss them into a drawer where they'll rattle around and break. The compartments of a silverware container (usually made of plastic) provide good protection and allow you to organize your drawing tools into groups. Or you can simply collect long, shallow cardboard boxes—the kind that small gifts often come in.



Knife and Sandpaper Pad. The pencil at the right has been shaped to a point with a mechanical pencil sharpener. The other pencil has been shaped to a broader point with a knife and sandpaper. The knife is used to cut away the wood without cutting away much of the lead. Then the pencil point is rubbed on the sandpaper to create a broad, flat tip. Buy a knife with a retractable blade that's safe to carry. To the right of the knife is a sandpaper pad that you can buy in most art-supply stores; it's like a small book, bound at one end so you can tear off the graphite-coated pages.

Stomps and Cleansing Tissue. To blend charcoal and push the blended tones into tight corners, you can buy stomps of various sizes in any good art-supply store. A stomp is made of tightly rolled paper with a tapered end and a sharp point. Use the tapered part for blending broad areas and the tip for blending small areas. A crumpled cleansing tissue can be used to dust off an unsatisfactory area of a drawing done in natural charcoal. (It's harder to dust off the mark of a charcoal pencil.) You can also use a tissue to spread a soft tone over a large area.

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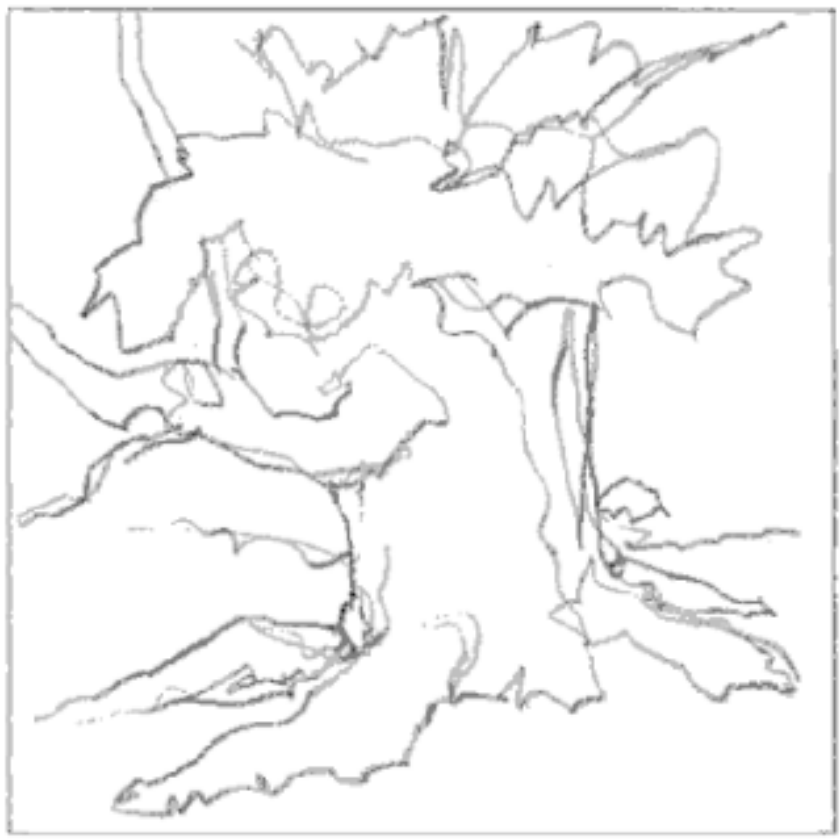
Contour Drawing. Like an athlete, an artist needs to warm up. One of the classic warm-up exercises is *contour drawing*. Choose a subject with big, interesting shapes—such as this tree stump. Let your eye move gradually around the edges of the shapes. Draw the contours with a sharply pointed pencil, letting the pencil rove across the paper as your eye roves over the subject. Try not to look at the paper too much, but keep your eye on the subject. Let your pencil "feel" its way over the paper as your eye "feels" its way around the shapes. Forget about details and draw only the big forms. Contour drawing teaches you to look at shapes carefully and draw them simply.



Groping Line. Now try another contour drawing with a thick pencil—or any pencil with a blunt point. Let your eye move very slowly around the shapes of the subject, while the pencil gropes its way slowly across the paper. Try to draw with the fewest possible lines, and do your best to keep your eye on the subject while you draw. Don't look at the paper too often. Don't worry if your line looks thick and clumsy. A thick line may not be elegant, but it's powerful and expressive. The value of this groping-line exercise is to make you slow down, look carefully, and capture essential shapes without fussing about details.

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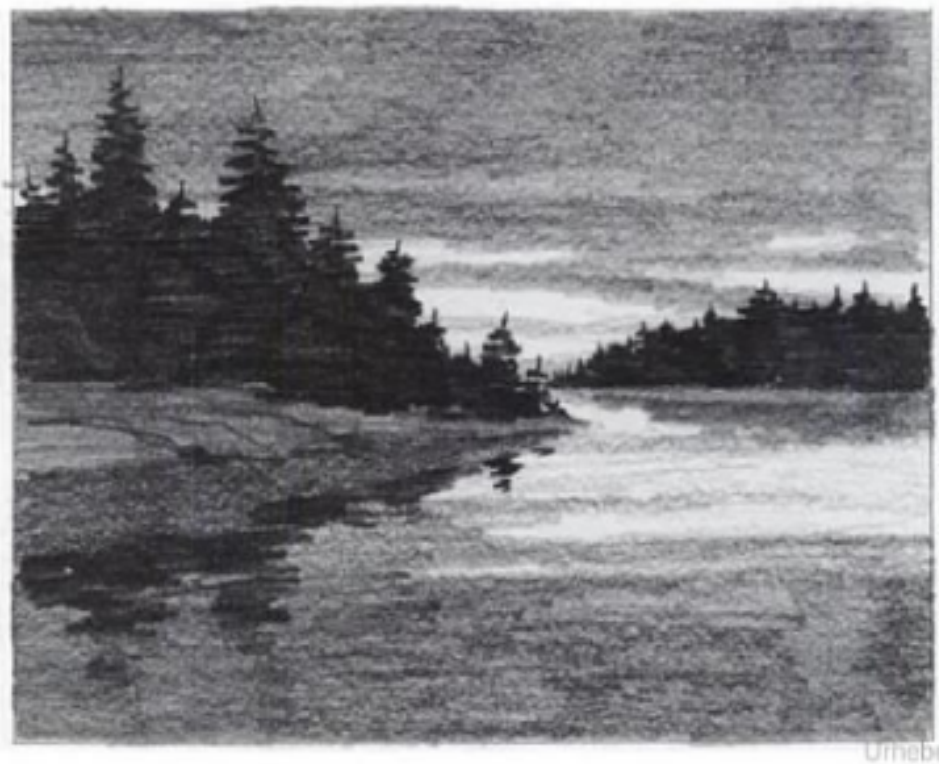
Scribbling. Now try a radically different warm-up exercise. Working again with a sharp pencil, let your eye wander over the subject while your hand scribbles round and round on the paper. Keep the pencil moving, whizzing back and forth, up and down, in zigzags and circles. You're not trying to trace the precise contours of each shape but trying to capture the subject's *overall shape* with rapid, intuitive movements. Your scribbled drawing will look messier than your other drawings, but the scribbles will have vitality and spontaneity—and that's what this warm-up exercise teaches you: to draw freely and spontaneously, trusting your intuition and "letting go."

Gesture Drawing. The subject doesn't actually move, but artists often talk about the *movement* of its forms. In reality, it's your *eye* that moves—rhythmically over the forms. The forms create a path for the eye, telling it where to go and communicating a *sense* of movement. This is what you try to capture in what artists call a *gesture drawing*. Let your eye move quickly over and around the shapes of the subject while your pencil glides over the paper, as a skater glides on ice, imitating your quick, sweeping eye movements. This final warm-up exercise teaches you to look for the internal movements and rhythms of your subject—and then capture them with spontaneous lines.

High Key. Artists also talk about the *key* of the landscape. When the overall tone of the landscape is generally pale, it's called a *high-key* picture. In this case, the values are apt to come from the beginning of the value scale—pale grays and possibly white. Even the darkest tones in the picture—the trees on the shoreline at the left—are relatively pale. Foggy coastlines and misty landscapes are often in a high key.



Low Key. In contrast with a high-key subject, a *low-key* picture is predominantly dark, drawing most of its values from the dark end of the scale. A change in light or weather can convert the same subject from a high key to a low one, as you see here. Now the trees are a deep gray (almost black) and the lighter tones of the sky, water, and shore are still fairly dark. Only the strips of light in the sky and water come from the light end of the value scale. It's interesting to note that the high-key picture above is a low-contrast subject, while this low-key landscape has higher contrast.

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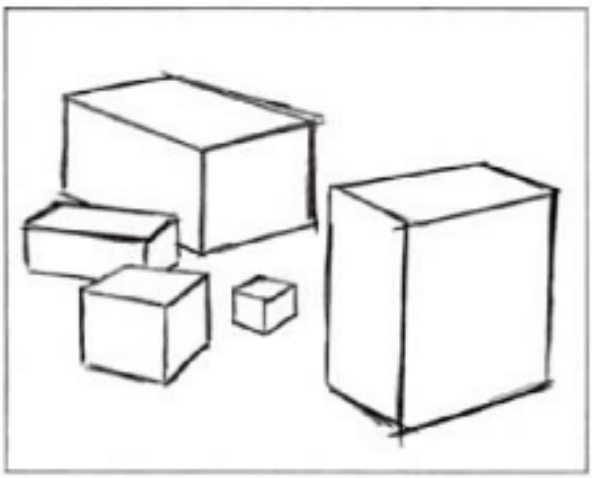
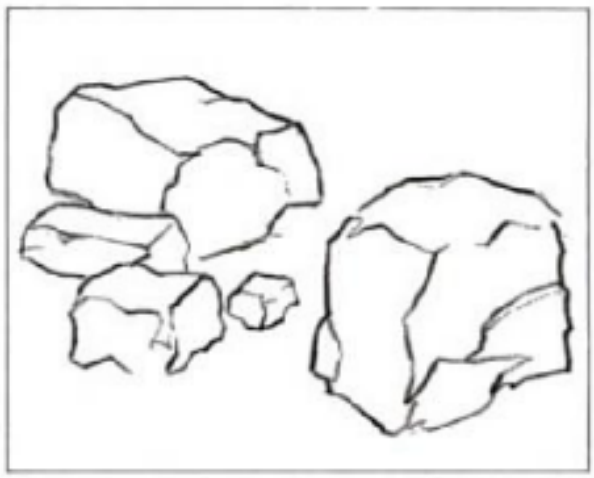
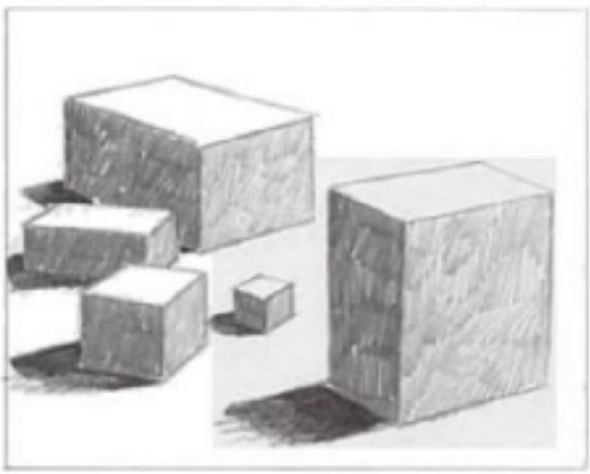


Cubes. Geometric forms are the basis of many shapes in nature, so it pays to practice drawing cubes and other blocky shapes. You can collect a variety of boxes around the house, scatter them on top of a table, and draw them from various angles. Start out drawing them with pencil lines. Keep your pencil sharp and don't hesitate to go over the lines several times until they're accurate. Don't use a ruler, but draw freehand. The lines don't have to be perfect.



Rocks. If you can draw those boxy shapes with reasonable accuracy, you can easily draw the blocky forms of rocks, which have top and side planes just like boxes—although the planes of the rocks will certainly be more irregular. You can begin to draw each rock by drawing a box (like those at the left) and then going back over the straight lines to transform the shapes into rocks. As you've already learned, it's also easier to visualize *proportions* if you start out with imaginary boxes.



Cubes in Light and Shade. When you've had enough practice drawing boxes with pencil lines, render the tones on the top and side planes of the boxes with the side of the pencil lead. Generally, you'll find that each plane of the box has its own value. In this case, the top plane catches the light and is the palest value; one side plane is a light gray halftone (or middletone); and another side plane is a darker gray, representing the shadow side of the block. The block also casts a shadow on the tabletop—darkest right next to the block and gradually growing paler as the shadow moves away.

Rocks in Light and Shade. Keep these three planes in mind when you draw the values on real rocks. The planes won't be neat—nor will they be quite so obvious—but look carefully and you'll find them. In these rocks, as in the boxes at your left, the top plane is the light, one side plane is the halftone (or middletone), and another side plane is the shadow. The order of these planes *can* change when the light comes from a different direction: when the sun is low in the sky, one side plane could become the light and the other two planes, the halftone and shadow.

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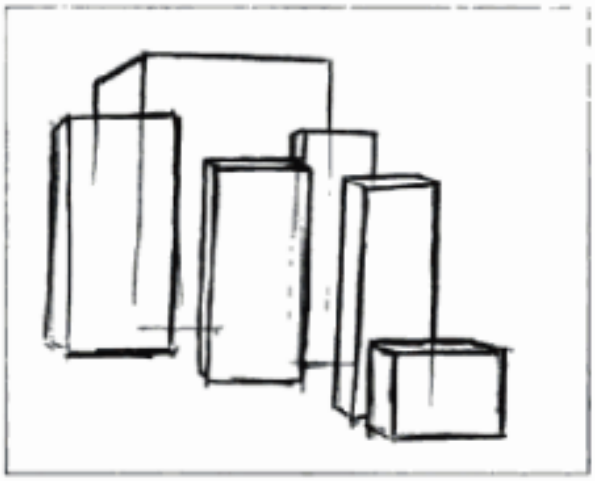
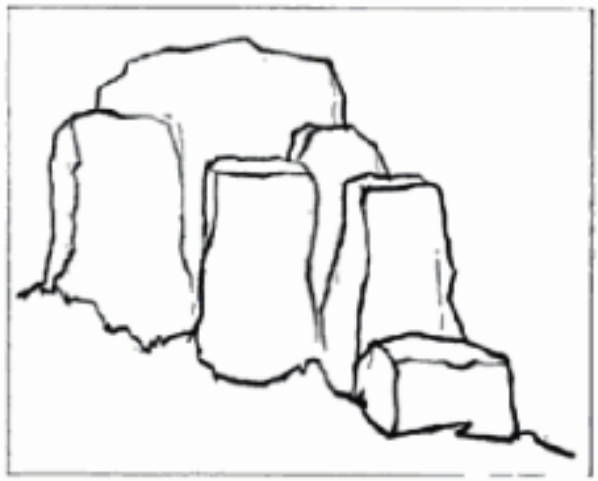


Oblongs. Imagine cubes sliced into pieces of various shapes and you have a number of oblongs. If you can find several long, slender boxes around the house, draw them just as you drew the cubical shapes on the previous page. It's helpful to draw these boxes as if they were made of glass, so you can see through them to the boxes behind. Draw the whole box, even if part of it is concealed by the box in front.



Cliff. Lofty rock formations, such as cliffs, often look like collections of oblongs. When you draw these natural shapes, keep those tall, slender boxes in mind. In fact, you can actually begin by drawing the shapes of the cliff as a series of oblongs, then go over the guidelines with more irregular lines that capture the rocky character of the subject.

Oblongs in Light and Shade. Use the side of your pencil to block in the tones on the three planes of those tall boxes, and pay particular attention to the shadows that the boxes cast on one another. The light strikes the boxes from the front, so the frontal planes are the lightest value, the top planes are the halftones (or the middletones), and the side planes are the shadows. The cast shadows aren't a solid, even tone, but contain some reflected light picked up from a secondary light source, such as a distant window at the left.

Cliff in Light and Shade. The same tonal pattern appears on the cliffs, which are essentially oblongs. Of course, the planes of light, halftone, and shadow aren't as neat on these rugged rocks, but you can still see them clearly. Notice that the cast shadows contain a hint of reflected light picked up from the sky.

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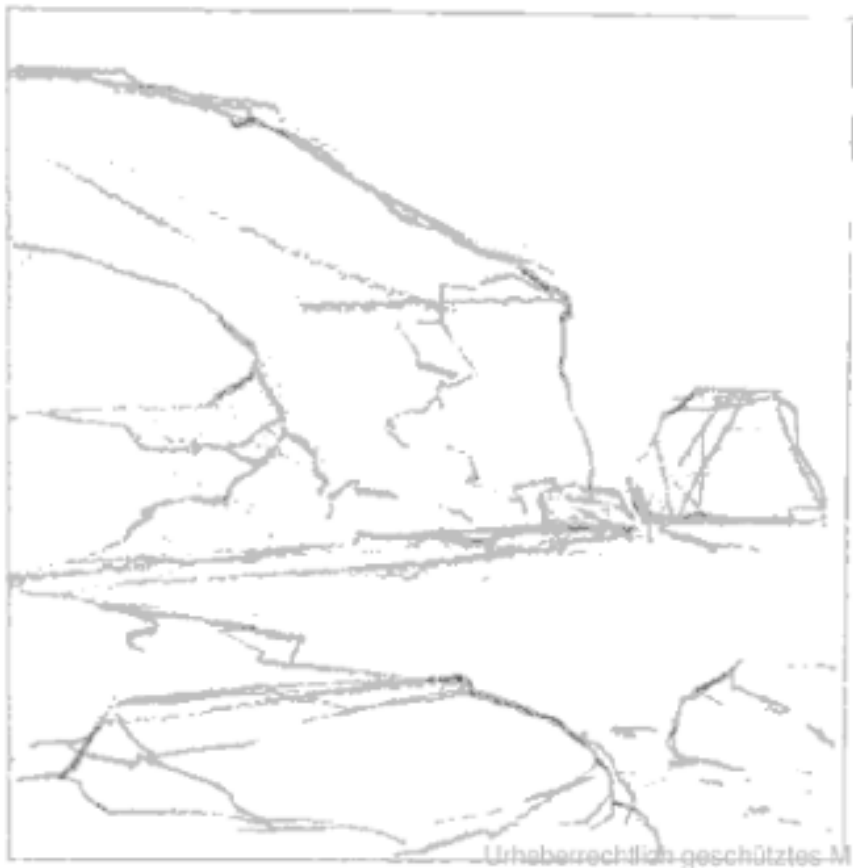
Step 1. When you go outdoors to draw, look for natural forms to which you can apply what you've learned about drawing cubical shapes. In the first few lines of his drawing of a rocky headland, the artist visualizes the subject as a huge cube with a slanted top plane. The smaller rock at the extreme right is also a kind of cube with slanted sides. And the foreground rocks are slices of cubes. These first few pencil lines are simply guidelines over which the actual shapes of the headland and rocks will be drawn more precisely.

Step 2. Going back over the pale guidelines with firmer, darker strokes of the pencil, the artist draws the realistic contours of the headland and rocks. He looks for the erratic turns and breaks in the contours—the irregularities that make the shapes look more rocky. But he doesn't erase the original guidelines just yet, keeping in mind the simplified geometric forms that he drew in Step 1.



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Step 3. Working with the side of the pencil, the artist blocks in the shapes of the shadows with broad, rough strokes. Now the big headland is clearly divided into planes of light and shadow, with the brightest light falling on the top plane. The rock to the right of the headland also has a lighted top plane and a shadowy side plane. The foreground rocks don't seem to receive as much direct light from the sun, so their top planes are darker than that of the headland, while the side plane (suggested in the lower right) is darker still.

Step 4. Continuing to work with the side of the pencil, the artist adds the middletones (or halftones)—those values which fall between the lights and shadows—reinforcing the blocky shapes of the cliff and rocks. He also darkens the shadowy side planes of the rocks, emphasizing their blocky shapes. So far, the artist has concentrated on the big shapes of light, shadow, and halftone that make the shapes look solid and three-dimensional. Now he finishes the drawing by adding the cracks and other details within the rocks, plus the trees and the shoreline.

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Cylinders. In outdoor subjects, cylindrical shapes are just as common as blocky shapes. Trees and branches are essentially cylindrical, although the simple geometric shapes may be concealed under the distracting detail of foliage and bark. When you look at a group of trees, try to visualize the trunks and branches as a collection of cylinders, some upright, some slanted and some horizontal. In fact, it's helpful to draw these cylinders with pencil lines.

Tree Trunks. When you've drawn these cylinders, you have convenient guidelines over which you can draw the actual shapes of the living trees with sharper, darker pencil lines. Now you can look for the irregularities in the contours—the bumps and dips that make the shapes of the trees and branches look real. But don't forget that the shapes are still basically cylindrical.

Cylinders in Light and Shade. In contrast with cubical shapes—where there are distinct planes of light, halftone, and shadow—the tones all run together on a cylinder. From left to right on the cylindrical shapes in this picture, you can see the gradual transition from the lighted left side of the tree to the halftone (or middletone) to the shadow to the reflected light within the shadow. (In outdoor subjects, shadows often contain light reflected from the distant sky or bounced off the mirrorlike surface of nearby water.) These cylindrical shapes cast curving shadows on one another.

Tree Trunks in Light and Shade. When you render the gradations of light, halftone (or middletone), shadow, and reflected light on tree trunks and branches, remember how the light wraps around a geometric cylinder. Don't be distracted by the texture of the bark. You can draw the bark with small, distinct strokes that convey the texture—but press harder on the pencil as you move from light to shadow, then make the strokes lighter as the shadow curves around to pick up the reflected light. The cast shadow on the ground is broken up by the grass, but you can draw this shadow with small "grassy" strokes.

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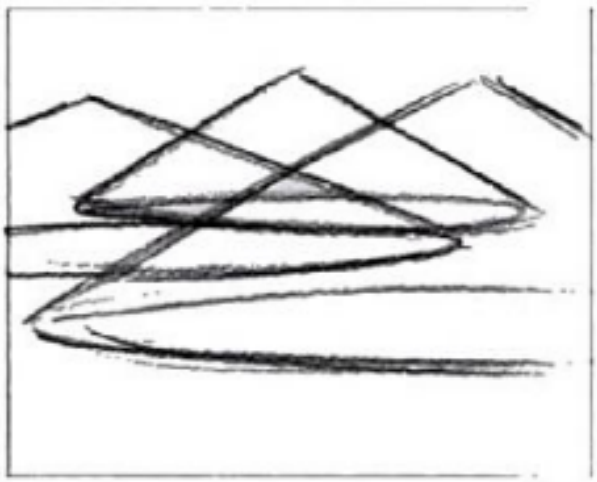
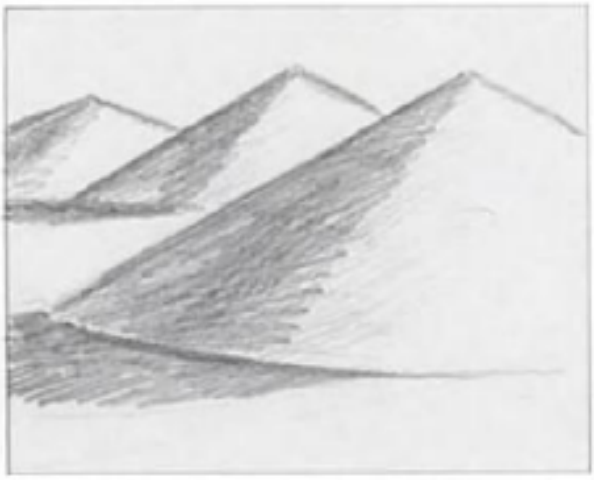


Cones. A cone is closely related to a cylinder in the sense that both have curving sides—but the sides of the cone taper, while the sides of the cylinder remain roughly parallel. Practice drawing cones. Imagine that they're made of glass so you can see one behind the other—and so you can draw their elliptical bottoms. In this way, you get into the habit of visualizing cones as solid, three-dimensional forms. Ellipses are particularly hard to draw, so swing your arm with free, rhythmic movements, and don't hesitate to keep going over the lines.

Dunes. Sand dunes—like hills—are often flattened cones with irregular sides. When you draw sand dunes, remember their basic geometric shape even if that shape seems to disappear under the realistic contours of the sand. You can actually begin by drawing geometric cones and then draw the dunes over them. Or you can draw the dunes directly and keep the cones in your head.



Cones in Light and Shade. Light, halftone (or middletone), and shadow wrap around cones very much as they do around the curving sides of cylinders. Those gradations can be subtle, so observe them carefully. On the dark side of the nearest flattened cone in this illustration, notice how the strokes become slightly denser to indicate the change from halftone to shadow—and then the strokes become more open to suggest reflected light at the left.

Dunes in Light and Shade. When you render the pattern of light and shade on the actual dune, remember the behavior of the tones on the geometric cones. Like the imaginary cones at left, the conelike shapes of the dunes pick up the sunlight on their right-hand sides and then curve gradually around into halftone and shadow. There isn't always a neat gradation from light to halftone to shadow to reflected light. In this case, reflected light appears throughout the shadow. The artist leaves some spaces between pencil strokes to suggest reflected light from the sky.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 1. An "outdoor still life," such as these two tree stumps, offers a good chance to draw cylindrical forms in nature. The artist begins by visualizing the stumps as short, thick, tilted cylinders with elliptical tops. The root at the left is a slender, tapered cylinder, something like a cone. The sharpened point of the pencil moves lightly over the paper so that these guidelines can be erased at a later stage in the drawing.

Step 2. Using the cylindrical shapes of Step 1 as a guide, the artist looks carefully at his subject and draws the ragged contours of the weathered wood over the pale lines. He doesn't follow the original guidelines *too* faithfully, but departs from them freely to create a more realistic drawing of the two stumps. He draws the jagged, broken tops of the stumps right over the elliptical guidelines—but he remembers that the ellipses are there. The root at the left no longer looks very cylindrical or conical, but the artist will remember the geometric form when he adds tone to the root.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 3. Working with the side of the pencil, the artist carries broad strokes down the stump to establish the big shapes of the darks. Now there's a clear distinction between the light and shade on each large cylinder, as well as on the root at the left. At the tops of the stumps, strong darks are placed with the ragged shapes as they turn away from the light. A single root at the right is entirely in shadow, so this tone is blocked in.

Step 4. Pressing harder on the side of the pencil, the artist darkens the tones on the cylindrical stumps to make the shapes look three-dimensional. Although the tones are interrupted by the broken texture of the weathered wood, the strokes suggest the gradual right-to-left gradation: light, halftone (or middletone), shadow, and reflected light within the shadow. The darkest shadows are placed within the cracks and where the stumps overlap. The artist's final step is to draw small details, such as the twigs and cracks, which come *after* he's rendered the gradation of light and shade that makes the subject look solid.

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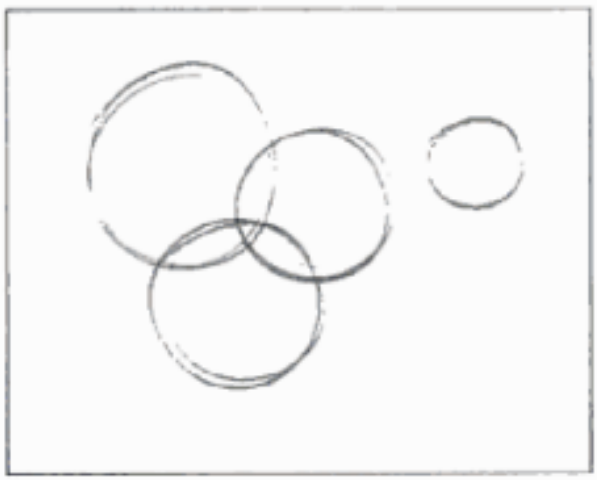


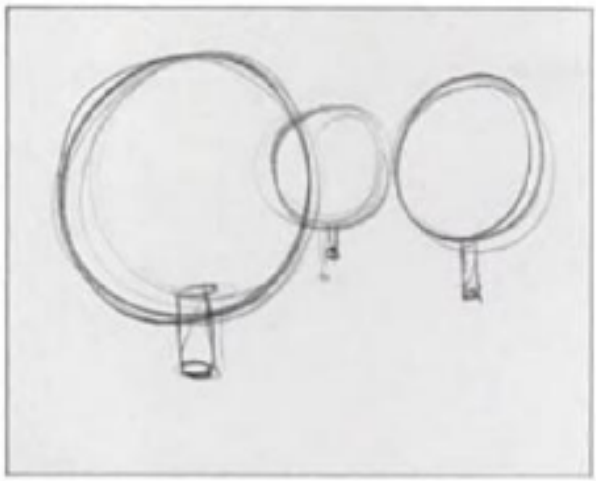
Spheres. Another basic geometric form that occurs constantly in nature is the sphere. Although there aren't many *perfect* circles in nature, practice drawing circles with the point of your pencil. The secret of drawing a really round circle is to swing your whole arm, starting from the shoulder, not from the wrist or elbow. Keep repeating that circular movement, going around and around, going over each circle again and again until the shape seems right. Your circles won't be geometrically perfect, but practice will make them round and full, which is what matters.

Rounded Rocks. Boulders are often irregular spheres, flattened here and there, and partly buried in grass or dirt. Once you've learned how to draw a circle with quick, rhythmic movements, you can draw circular guidelines and then build realistic boulders over these round shapes. Or you can go directly to work drawing the irregular contours of the boulders themselves.

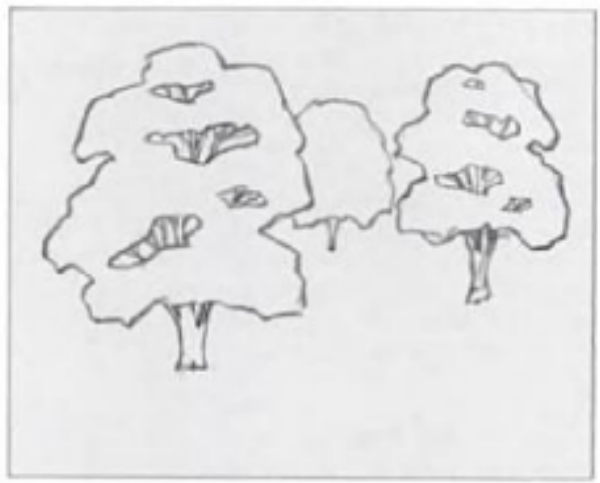
Spheres in Light and Shade. A sphere, like a cylinder, is a rounded form, so the tones wrap softly around the sphere and seem to flow together. Rendering the gradations of light and shade on a sphere takes practice. Put a tennis ball—or any kind of pale ball—near a window so that it receives strong light, and then practice rendering the tones with broad strokes, made with the side of the pencil. Exaggerate the areas of light, halftone (or middletone), shadow, and reflected light, as you see here, so they remain firmly fixed in your memory.

Rounded Rocks in Light and Shade. When you draw real boulders scattered in a grassy field, the rocky textures will be rough and irregular, making the gradation of light and shade harder to see. Render the tones with rough, irregular strokes, but vary the strokes so that they're lighter or darker to match the tonal areas you've seen on the tennis balls. Like the geometrically perfect balls at the left, these boulders are lit from the right, so there's a right-to-left gradation of tone from light to halftone to shadow to reflected light.

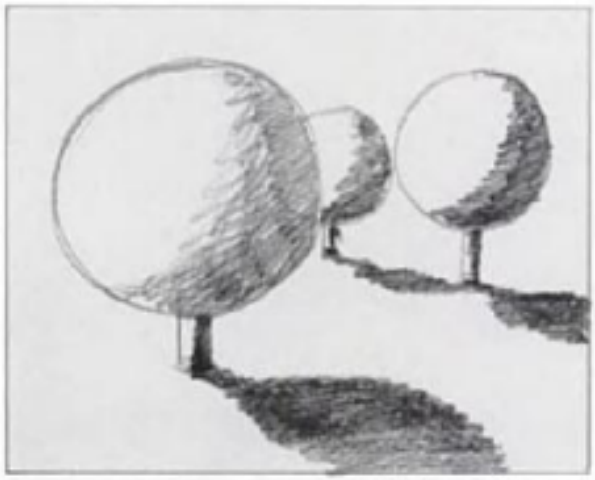
Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material



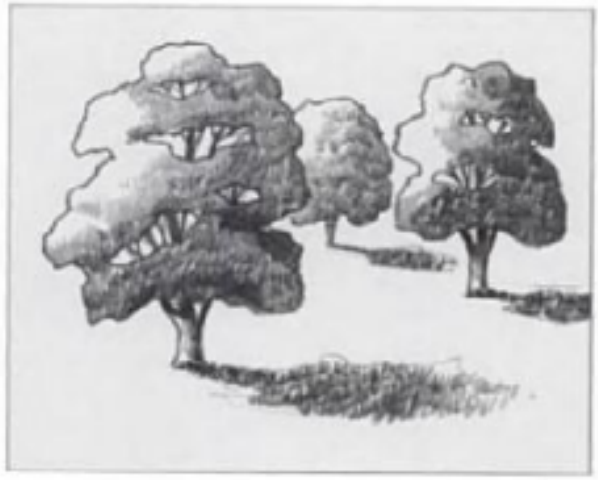
Spheres (Plus Cylinders). Trees and shrubs rarely look exactly like spheres, but it's often helpful to visualize them as spherical forms, just as it's helpful to visualize their trunks as cylinders. If the mass of foliage looks as if it would fit into a circle, you can begin with a circular guideline and then chop holes into the geometric form when you draw the actual tree.



Trees. The leafy masses of these three trees are all roughly circular, although the actual outline of the trees contains big gaps and doesn't look circular at first glance. The trunks are basically cylindrical, even though each trunk diverges to form branches above and spreads slightly at the bottom of the cylinder where the roots go underground. These spherical and cylindrical forms will become more apparent when you add light and shade to the trees.



Spheres (Plus Cylinders) in Light and Shade. Before you start to add tone to the trees, remember what you've learned about the gradation of light, halftone (or middletone), shadow, and reflected light on spheres and cylinders. Remember, too, that a rounded form casts a rounded—or elliptical—shadow on the ground.



Trees in Light and Shade. The tones of the leafy masses follow the same progression as the tones on the geometric sphere. Although your pencil strokes can look rough and irregular—to convey the texture and detail of the leaves—place your lighter strokes in the halftone areas, your darker strokes in the shadows, and allow some space between the strokes to suggest reflected light within the shadows. Follow the same sequence of tones when you render the cylindrical trunks and branches. Group your "grassy" strokes to make the shadows look like rough ellipses.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 1. Drawing outdoors, you often find trees and rocks with shapes that are essentially round. In this landscape drawing, the artist begins by drawing circular guidelines with light touches of a sharpened pencil. Then, working within the simple geometric shapes, he constructs the realistic shapes of the trees and rocks. Notice how the irregular outlines of the trees move back and forth over the circular shapes but still remain roughly faithful to the circle. The rocks really start out as half circles, since the lower part of the rock is buried in the ground, and then the artist draws flatter, more angular lines over the half circles.

Step 2. Using the side of the pencil, the artist blocks in the big shapes of the darks. The sunlight comes from the sky in the upper left, so the darks appear on the right sides and on the undersides of the leafy masses—and on the right sides of the boulders. The cylindrical tree trunks are mostly in shadow. As he blocks in the tones, the artist keeps in mind the behavior of light and shade on spherical forms.

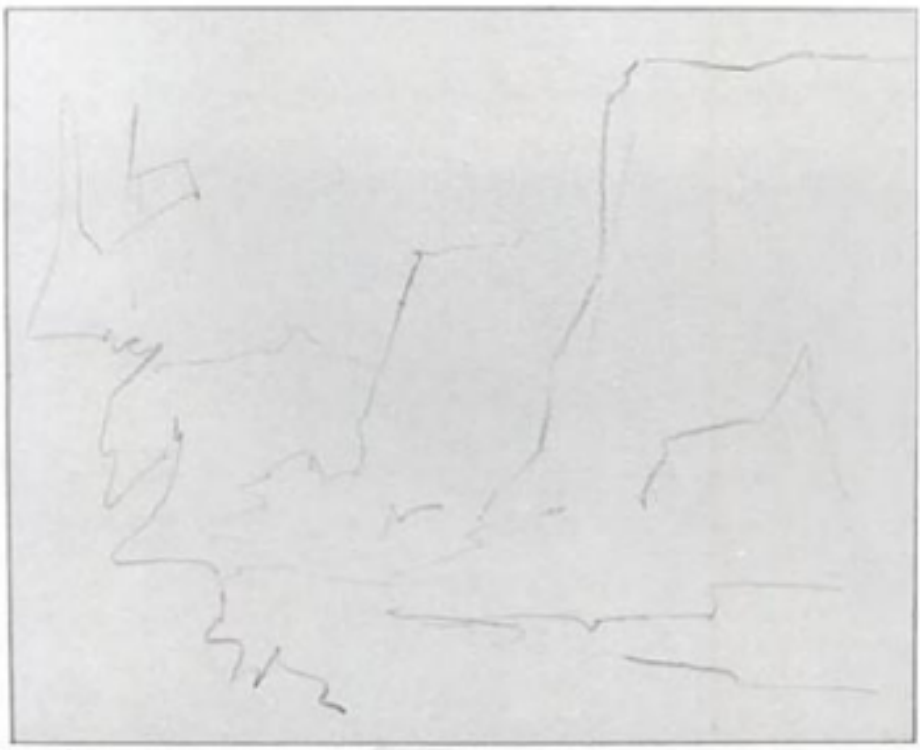
Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 3. Now the artist adds the halftones (or middletones) and strengthens the darks. Although the tones are obviously broken up by the clusters of foliage, it's easy to see how the tones on the smaller tree at the left behave like the gradations on a sphere. The tones on the big tree trunk at the right are like the gradations on a cylinder. The artist establishes a strong distinction between the lighted tops and shadowy sides of the rocks, which now look blockier—like spheres that have been flattened. Notice how the shadow sides of the rocks grow lighter toward the right, where they pick up some reflected light from the sky.

Step 4. So far, the artist has been working entirely with big masses of tone. Now he goes back to add the details and strengthen the tones in the final stage of drawing. He adds more branches to the trees, broadens and darkens the shadows on the leaves, and suggests individual leaves with quick strokes made by using the side of the pencil. He scribbles in the grass with short vertical strokes. And most interesting of all, he takes the big geometric shapes of the rocks and breaks them into smaller shapes by adding cracks and stronger shadows. Half-close your eyes and you'll see that the clusters of rocks here are really quite faithful to the simplified geometric shapes of the rocks in Steps 2 and 3.

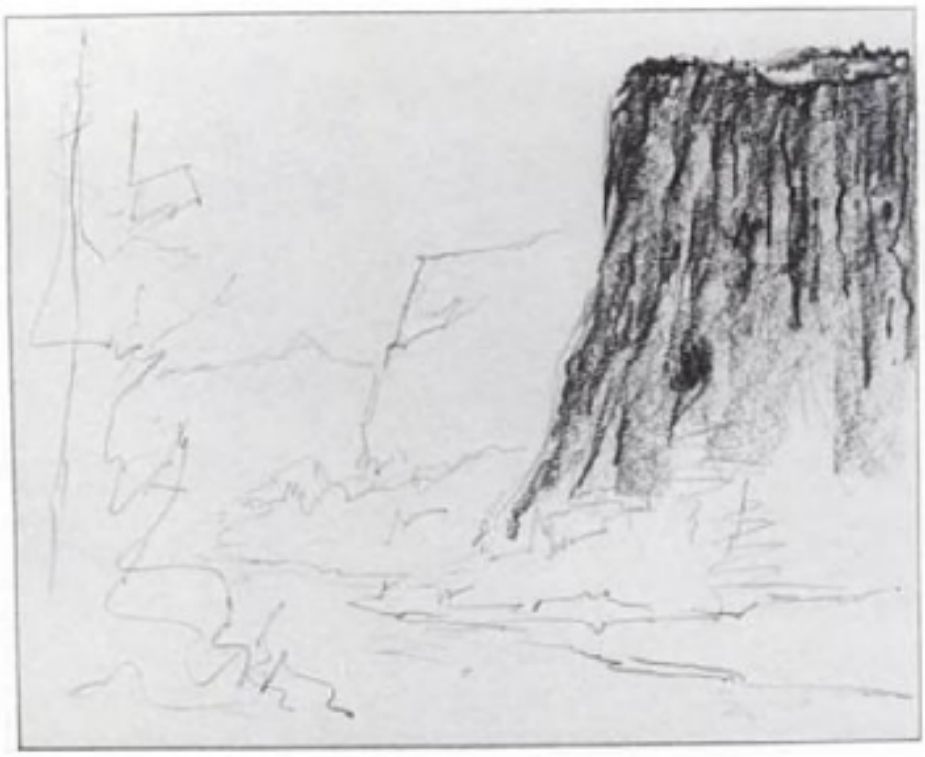
Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 1. This demonstration drawing of mountains and evergreens will give you an idea of the variety of marks you can make with a stick of chalk—ranging from slender lines made with the sharp corner to broad strokes made with the squarish end or the flat side. As always, the artist begins with a very simple line drawing, using the sharp corner of the chalk. He draws the silhouettes of the cliffs, which look like irregular squares. He visualizes the cluster of evergreens at the foot of the cliff as a single mass—and he encloses this mass with just a few lines. The cluster of evergreens on the left-hand side of the picture is suggested with a zigzag line.



Step 2. Still working with the sharp corner of the chalk, the artist draws the contours of the cliffs more carefully. Along the top and side of the big cliff on the right, he draws a second line to suggest strips of light. At the bases of the rocky shapes, he moves inside the original guidelines to draw shapes that look more like trees, although he still works with just a few casual lines, knowing that they'll soon be covered with heavier strokes of tone. At the extreme left, he adds a rough vertical stroke to suggest a tree trunk that will show more clearly at a later stage of the drawing.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material



Step 3. With the squarish end of the chalk, the artist begins to block in the shadows on the face of the big cliff. Then, turning the chalk so that the sharp corner touches the paper, he draws deep, dark cracks that run in wavy vertical lines down the cliff. He also begins to sharpen the contours of the top. Although the overall shape of the cliff is more or less square, the rocky forms on its face look like irregular cylinders—on which the artist suggests the gradation from light to shadow to reflected light that you see on cylindrical forms. At the top of the cliff, you can see the patch of light that the artist outlined in Step 2.

Step 4. The artist picks up a short chunk of broken (or worn-down) chalk. With the flat side of the broken stick, he darkens the big cliff and blocks in broad tones on both the central cliff and the pale mountain in the distance. He uses a sharp corner to draw more cracks. With the squarish end of the stick, he draws the dark foliage with thick horizontal lines. Then he draws slim vertical lines for the trunks with the sharp corner of the chalk. He places a shadow on the shore beneath the trunks with the flat side of the chalk, and then he draws the shoreline with the corner.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 5. Pressing more lightly on the square end of the chalk, the artist draws the paler, more distant mass of evergreens, adding a few crisp strokes with the corner of the stick to suggest a few trunks. He also uses the squarish end of the stick to block in the reflections of the evergreens in the water with horizontal strokes. Notice that the reflections are lighter than the trees.

Step 6. As the stick of chalk wears down, its tip becomes blunt and slightly rounded, making a stroke which is thick but no longer squarish. Now the artist draws the dense foliage of the evergreens at the left, making clusters of horizontal and diagonal strokes with the blunt end of the chalk. He leaves spaces between the strokes to suggest the light of the sky breaking through the foliage. Then, working with the sharp corner of a fresh piece of chalk—or sharpening a worn piece on the sandpaper pad—he adds crisp vertical lines to suggest trunks and a few branches.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 7. In this final stage, the artist goes over all three mountainous shapes with the flat side of a short chunk of chalk, darkening them with broad strokes. With the sharp corner, he adds more cracks to the two nearby mountains, but he remembers the rules of aerial perspective and adds no details to the pale, distant mountain. With the blunt end of a worn stick, he darkens all the trees with a dense layer of horizontal strokes and then darkens the shoreline and reflections on the right in the same way. Heavy zigzag strokes suggest the reflections of a few individual trees in the stream. Finally, the artist sharpens the chalk to a point and adds the precise lines of branches and twigs to the cluster of trees at the extreme left. This part of the picture is closest to the viewer, so that's where the artist concentrates his precise details—remembering the rules of aerial perspective once again.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 1. Like charcoal, chalk lends itself equally well to crisp lines, broad strokes, and blended tones. A seascape, combining the rugged forms of rocks and the softer forms of water, is a good subject for exploring this combination of chalk-drawing techniques. In his preliminary line drawing, the artist draws the hard, distinct shapes of the rocks and the softer, less distinct shapes of the surf and waves with equal care. Although the sea keeps moving, the waves and surf assume repetitive shapes, which the artist studies carefully and then draws quickly with curving lines. Of course, many of these lines will eventually disappear when the tones of the surf are blended.

Step 2. Working over and within the guidelines of Step 1, the artist draws the rocks in more detail. He adds smaller shapes within the big shapes that were defined in the original guidelines. He draws the distant waves more precisely but avoids adding more lines to the soft, curving shape of the foam between the rocks, since this soft shape will be rendered with blended tones rather than lines or strokes.

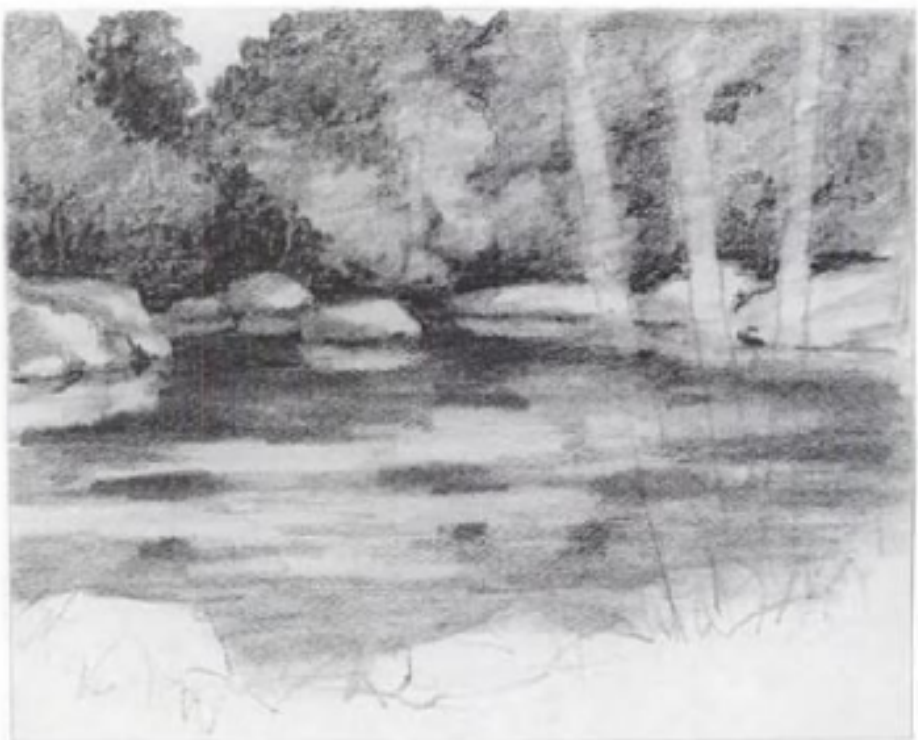
Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 1. Now look for a landscape subject that will give you an opportunity to combine slender lines, broad strokes, and smudged tones. For this demonstration, the artist chooses a pond surrounded by trees and rocks. This preliminary line drawing, made with a hard charcoal pencil, simply defines the group of tree trunks on the right, the rocky shorelines across the center of the picture, and the soft shapes of the trees on the far shore. The artist makes no attempt to draw the details of the light and shadow in the water, which he'll block in with broad tones in the next step.

Step 2. The artist has chosen a rough sheet of paper whose texture will suggest the details of foliage and also permit him to do a lot of blending. Working with the side of a medium charcoal pencil, he blocks in the tones of the mass of trees on the far shore, building stroke upon stroke to darken the shadow areas. He also blocks in the shadowy sides of the rocks. Then he begins to draw the dark reflections of the trees in the water, using long horizontal strokes. He blends all these tones lightly with a fingertip but doesn't rub hard enough to obliterate the strokes. He brightens the sunlit tops of the rocks with the kneaded rubber eraser.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 3. Working with the medium charcoal pencil, he blocks in the darks among the distant trees—and their reflections in the water—with short, curving strokes that suggest the character of foliage. He doesn't blend these strokes but allows them to stand out, dark and distinct among the gray tones that appeared in Step 2. He uses the kneaded rubber to lighten some clusters of foliage and suggest patches of sunlight among the trees.



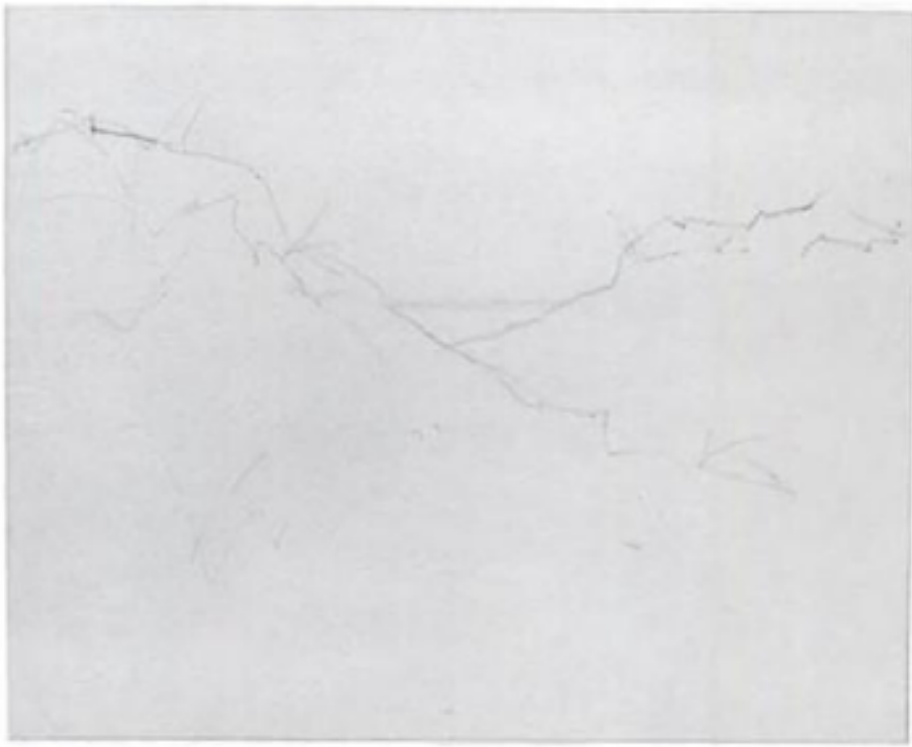
Step 4. Moving down across the water, the artist continues to block in the pattern of light and dark with horizontal strokes. Next he moves his fingertip horizontally across the paper to turn the strokes into subtle, smoky tones. He carries patches of darkness down into the water, suggesting more reflections of the trees on the distant shore. And he wipes away streaks of sunlight on the water with a kneaded rubber eraser. Notice that the lines of the three tree trunks on the right are almost obliterated. But this is no problem; the trees will soon reappear.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 7. Picking up a soft charcoal pencil, the artist moves it lightly over the mass of trees on the far shore and blends the strokes softly with a fingertip to darken the entire area. He then uses his charcoal-covered fingertip to darken the shadows on the rock and the shadowy patches in the water. (If he runs out of charcoal on his fingertip, he can easily blacken his finger again by pressing it against the blackened sandpaper pad.) The tip of the medium charcoal pencil adds more foliage in the upper right with quick, scribbly strokes. The sharp point of the pencil adds more twigs and branches, and then moves down to add more grasses and weeds to the foreground. To strengthen the contrast between light and shadow, the kneaded rubber eraser comes into play. It's squeezed to a sharp point to clean jagged patches of sky and the sunlit areas of the rocks. Then the eraser is moved very lightly across the water—horizontally and then vertically—to add splashes of light on the shadowy surface of the pond. The eraser creates a flash of sunlight on one tree trunk at the extreme right. Squeezing the eraser to a sharp point, the artist picks out some pale lines among the foreground grasses to suggest blades caught in sunlight. Throughout the drawing, the rough texture of the paper adds boldness to the strokes, suggests detail among the distant clumps of foliage, and adds vitality to all the blended tones.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 1. For blended tones—with subtle gradations from deep blacks to misty grays—no medium compares with natural charcoal. To demonstrate the beauty of this simplest of all drawing mediums, the artist chooses the soft lights and shadows of dunes on a beach, with a brooding sky overhead. Sharpening a stick of natural charcoal on a sandpaper pad, the artist draws the silhouettes of two big dunes, suggesting patches of beach grass at the top of each dune. He draws a horizontal line for the horizon of the sea in the distance.



Step 2. The blended tones of natural charcoal are particularly beautiful on rough paper, and so the artist has chosen a sheet with a distinct tooth. He blocks in the dark clouds with broad strokes and then blends these strokes with a fingertip, moving his finger across the paper with a wavy motion that suggests the movement of the clouds. He uses his charcoal-covered finger like a brush to add veils of pale gray over the lighter areas of the sky. The dark, inverted triangle of sea, glimpsed between the dunes, is drawn with firm, dark strokes and blended slightly with a quick touch of the finger.

Urheberrechtlich geschütztes Material

Step 5. Quick, spontaneous touches of the sharpened charcoal stick suggest smaller plants and bits of debris below the clumps of beach grass. Another cluster of beach grass is added at the center of the picture and then slightly blurred with a touch of the fingertip, which creates a shadow. The artist presses his finger against the blackened sandpaper pad to pick up more tone. His finger spreads blobs of tone across the foreground to indicate shadowy curves and irregularities in the beach. Between the dark strokes made by his fingertip, the artist brightens patches of sand with the eraser, suggesting splashes of sunlight.

Step 6. Again sharpening the charcoal stick on the sandpaper pad, the artist adds a big clump of beach grass in the foreground. Then, turning the stick on its side, he draws long shadows slanting downward toward the right. He leaves these shadow strokes unblended. Now the charcoal stick moves across the beach, adding blades of beach grass here and there, plus touches to suggest the usual shoreline debris. Except for the shadows cast by the beach grass, the dune at the right remains bare white paper. Surrounded by so much tone, this patch of white paper radiates sunlight.

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LANDSCAPE DRAWING
STEP • BY • STEP
WENDON BLAKE

This easy-to-follow guide by a noted artist and teacher offers a wealth of valuable tips and suggestions for recording the beauty of nature on drawing paper. Stressing the value of on-the-spot drawings, Mr. Blake's clearly written manual provides time-tested advice on training your powers of observation; judging proportions of typical landscape forms such as boulders, trees, and clouds; learning how to judge light and dark areas of a subject to convert colors to black-and-white tones; and much more.

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